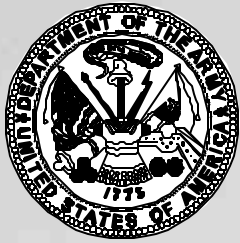


# **McGregor Range, New Mexico Land Withdrawal Renewal Legislative Environmental Impact Statement**



## **Requirements to Train Our Military**



### **McGregor Range Helps Defend Our Country's Interests**

The protection of United States national interests depends on strong, well-trained, and fully equipped armed forces. While the size of our military has been greatly reduced in recent years, there has been an increase in the diversity of missions they perform as they face an increasing diversity of international challenges. Our armed forces must still prepare for large contingencies, such as the 1991 Gulf War, but must also support peacetime missions. Recently, the military has been called upon to assist in humanitarian disaster relief, provide international policing, help support troubled nations, and rebuild institutions. This diversity of requirements is further enhanced by the need to understand procedures of allied military forces that work in increasingly close cooperation with the United States.

### **Fort Bliss/McGregor Range a Center of Excellence for Air Defense**

The McGregor Range complex plays a vital role in helping the military respond to these requirements. The Department of the Army force structure realignment co-located all Air Defense Artillery Brigades in the continental United States at Fort Bliss. Fort Bliss has become our nation's center for the training of air defense units. McGregor Range is the Army's only training range where modern air defense systems, such as the Patriot, can be fired by operational units. New air defense units use the range to learn basic skills, and to conduct tough, realistic exercises. Although the range is managed and

used heavily by the Army, the Navy, Air Force, and Marines are also regular users. Air defense units of allied nations also train at McGregor Range.

### **Air Defense Plays a Central Role in Peacetime and Wartime Missions**

As the center of excellence for air defense, Fort Bliss is the home of some of the nation's most active units. Air defense is indispensable to virtually all peacetime and wartime missions. Security from air attacks is a prerequisite for humanitarian and peacetime operations. Air defense units are often the first to arrive on the scene. They are currently integrated into the joint air campaign that enforces United Nations' no-fly zones and safe havens in Iraq. Field operations training on McGregor Range is critical to our continued capability to protect both soldiers and civilians from threats posed by missiles and manned aircraft in global crisis situations.

### **Support to Diplomacy**

Missions supporting diplomacy include peacekeeping and preventative diplomacy. These missions take place during peacetime or conflict and are conducted to prevent armed conflict. The Army's Air Defense Artillery's peacekeeping capabilities are used as a show of national resolve to deter hostile use of missiles and aircraft. This type of operation currently supports U.S. interests in the Middle East and the Republic of Korea. Special rules of engagement apply to this activity and are usually very restrictive, requiring highly trained and disciplined soldiers.

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## **International Military Education and Training Program**

The U.S. Army conducts military education and training programs on weapons systems for allied troops here in the United States, and also in allied nations. The training typically takes the form of formal courses, orientation tours, and on-the-job training, and is designed to enhance the proficiency, professional performance, interoperability, and readiness of allied military forces.

## **Foreign Military Sales Program**

This program allows designated governments to purchase military equipment, services, and training. The sale of defense items may require training on the operation and maintenance of military equipment. Allied troops are trained at U.S. military schools or by mobile training teams. Allied troops participate in Annual Service Practice missile firings conducted on McGregor Range.

## **McGregor Range Land Withdrawal**

McGregor Range, which comprises more than half of the Fort Bliss installation land area, was originally set aside for military use, and has been withdrawn continuously since

1957. Most recently, Public Law 99-606, also known as the *Military Lands Withdrawal Act of 1986*, requires that all of the military land withdrawals it governs, including McGregor Range, terminate on November 6, 2001. To continue military activities on McGregor Range beyond 2001, the Army applied to renew the withdrawal during October 1998. Part of the renewal requirement includes completion of a *Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (LEIS)* that addresses the environmental consequences of renewing the withdrawal. The Draft LEIS was provided to elected officials, federal, state, and local government agencies; organizations, and individual citizens in late October 1998. Congress is the decision maker for the land withdrawal and will issue its decision through legislation.

## **For More Information**

Further information on the renewal may be obtained by calling

915-568-6708 or toll-free 1-888-248-8329, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., mountain time. At other times, leave a message and your call will be returned. The Fort Bliss public affairs staff (915-568-4505) and Fort Bliss Web site ([www.bliss.army.mil](http://www.bliss.army.mil)) can provide additional information, or write to Fort Bliss Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center and Fort Bliss, Building 15, Fort Bliss, Texas 79916.

Comments on the Draft LEIS should be received by February 9, 1999. Please direct comments to Dr. Andy Vliet, Program Manager, McGregor Range Military Land Withdrawal Renewal, U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center and Fort Bliss, Attn: ATZC-CSA, P.O. Box 6020, Fort Bliss, Texas 79906, or send e-mail to: [mcmgregor@emh10.bliss.army.mil](mailto:mcmgregor@emh10.bliss.army.mil).

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